Missing Children Frequently Asked Questions

How is a child reported as missing?
Someone (it can be anyone – parent, other family member, school staff, social worker, etc.) reports a child as missing to a law enforcement officer. The law enforcement officer then completes a Missing Person Report.

What happens when a child is reported as missing?
The law enforcement officer reports the child as missing into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database by completing a Missing Person Report. The child's name, social security number, birthdate, last known school in which they are enrolled, and any other pertinent information regarding the person. From the NCIC database, Kentucky State Police sends KDE a daily file of all school-age children reported as missing or found within the last 24 hours in the state of Kentucky. This file is then batched into KDE's system which then matches the school of last known enrollment to the principal database in KDE's system.

Based on the information from both systems, email notification is then automatically sent to the principal of the school and Director of Pupil Personnel for the district from KDE staff (currently, this person is Victoria Fields). The notification is also copied to Kentucky State Police.

What should a school or district do when they receive a Missing Children Notification?
When principals receive Missing Children Notifications from KDE, it is imperative that they comply with KRS 156.495 and KRS 158.032 by flagging the student's educational records in Infinite Campus to ensure all appropriate school and district personnel are aware of the situation. The school or district shall immediately report to local law enforcement or the Kentucky State Police if any of the following occurs:
  ➢ Someone in the school knows of the student's whereabouts;
  ➢ The identified student is currently present at the school; or
  ➢ An individual or a school requests the student's records.

If any of the above occurs, who at Kentucky State Police should be contacted?
Missing Persons Unit
Paige Craig and/or Shayla Overturf
502-564-1020

Is notification or flagging of a student's record with Missing Persons a violation of FERPA?
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. However, FERPA is not intended to be an obstacle in addressing emergences and protecting the safety of students. Missing children and runaways should be considered as an emergency situation. For more guidance on FERPA and the disclosure of student information in an emergency or disaster, click here.

What should be done if the principal of the school has changed?
Districts can update the principal of schools by logging into KDE Web Applications, Person Role Manager. District WAAPOCs (Web Application Point of Contact) has access to complete this task. To determine the WAAPOC for your district, visit KDE's Open House | Directory and select your district. Additional questions or concerns regarding this process can be sent to Windy Newton.

What if my school or district is not the student's last known enrollment?
Contact Victoria Fields immediately to ensure the correct school and principal are notified.

What should a school or district do when they receive a Missing Children Notification of Cancellation?
If a school receives a notification of cancellation, enter the date the notification was received as the end date on the Missing Persons Program Flag. Refer to Missing Persons Flag instructions.

Why does a school sometimes only receive a Missing Children Notification of Cancellation without an initial Missing Children Notification?
If a student is reported missing and then subsequently reported found within 24 hours, the system will only generate a Missing Children Notification of Cancellation to the school. The initial Missing Child Notification will not be sent. The school should follow the instructions to add a Missing Persons Flag to the student's record. The start date and the end date would be the date the notification of cancellation was received. This will ensure the missing person's records are consistent.

Should a missing child's enrollment be ended at the school in Infinite Campus?
When a district receives a missing children notification, a district should not automatically withdraw the student as a W24 or any other withdrawal code. The missing persons can be used as a trigger to begin monitoring the student records and for flagging the student records. Districts should use the same procedure they do with any other child before using a W24, such as, so many days of absences, etc.

<div align="center">

Resources

</div>

KDE's Missing Children website

Missing Persons Flag instructions

National Crime Information Center website